

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church

971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905

Rev. Presbyter Dragan Vukovic

(814) 244-4063

The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman (05.14.2023)

John 4:5-42

Then cometh He to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water? Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us

all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him. In the mean while His disciples prayed Him, saying, Master, eat. But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. (KJV)

The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

God's Holy Church is continuing to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The defeat of death and the establishment of life everlasting merits the extended celebration by the Church.

Sundays following the celebration of Pascha are periods of great joy. The Church continues to proclaim and celebrate Jesus Christ's Resurrection until the Second Coming of the Lord.

The Church witnesses to the Resurrection and is evidence of the Living Christ. Jesus Christ is present in and through the Church. Believers are united with and experience Jesus Christ in the Church.

Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well resulted in the woman having an increased understanding of Jesus. The woman shared her personal experience with Jesus with other Samaritans.

When the other Samaritans learned about Jesus and came to hear Him, they became convinced of their own accord that Jesus was the Savior of the world. The present Gospel verifies for believers that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

The living water from Jesus leading to everlasting life continues to be available in God's Holy Church. Every person is free to drink from the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church.

Repentance facilitates and makes each person more receptive to the nourishing water from Christ. Repentance is the act of faith demonstrating commitment to follow Christ to the eternal Kingdom.

Christ offers Himself through the Church to persons seeking everlasting life. Christ is present in all places for persons to unite with Him. The Samaritan woman demonstrated by example the ease to personally experience Christ.

Everyone can converse with Jesus Christ through prayer. Living water can be drawn and received from Christ in the Divine services of the Church. The saints and martyrs are proof of the value of drawing nourishment from Christ.

The Sundays following Pascha radiate the joy of the Resurrection. Resurrection joy transforms serious believers. Resurrection joy is the basis for daily living.

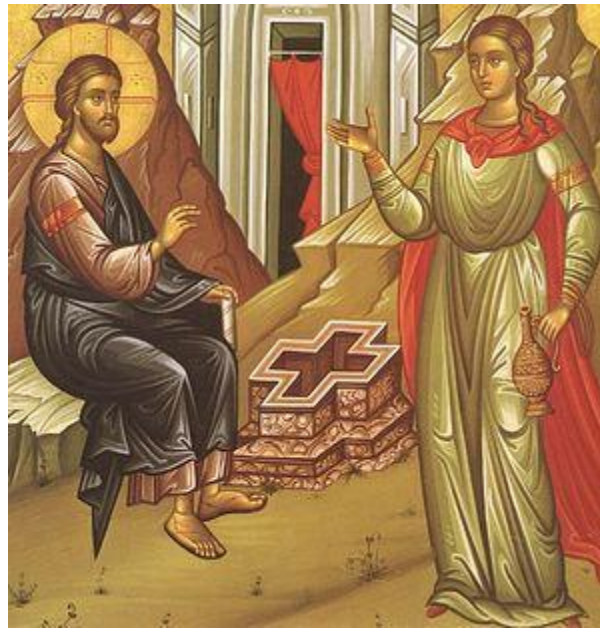
The Paschal troparion: “Christ is Risen from the dead trampling down death by death and upon the tombs bestowing life!” sets forth and celebrates the truth of the Resurrection.

Truth matters in daily living and throughout life. On this Sunday of the Samaritan Woman following Pascha, believers learn about the living water flowing from Jesus. The Resurrected Jesus Christ is the fountain of life everlasting.

The Sunday of the Samaritan Woman. The Holy Prophet Jeremiah. May 1/14, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

ST. JOHN GHRYSSOSTOM: ON THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Homily 33



Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. (Jn. 4:23-27)

[1.] Everywhere, beloved, we have need of faith, faith the mother of blessings, the medicine of salvation; and without this it is impossible to possess any one of the great doctrines. Without this, men are like to those who attempt to cross the open sea without a ship, who for a little way hold out by swimming, using both hands and feet, but when they have advanced farther, are quickly

swamped by the waves: in like manner they who use their own reasonings, before they have learnt anything, suffer shipwreck; as also Paul saith, "Who concerning faith have made shipwreck." (1 Tim. 1:19.) That this be not our case, let us hold fast the sacred anchor by which Christ bringeth over the Samaritan woman now. For when she had said, "How say ye that Jerusalem is the place in which men ought to worship?" Christ replied, "Believe Me, woman, that the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in Jerusalem, nor yet in this mountain, worship the Father." An exceedingly great doctrine He revealed to her, and one which He did not mention either to Nicodemus or Nathanael. She was eager to prove her own privileges more honorable than those of the Jews; and this she subtly argued from the Fathers, but Christ met not this question. For it was for the time distracting to speak on the matter, and to show why the Fathers worshiped in the mountain, and why the Jews at Jerusalem. Wherefore on this point He was silent, and having taken away from both places priority in dignity, rouses her soul by showing that neither Jews nor Samaritans possessed anything great in comparison with that which was to be given; and then He introduceth the difference. Yet even thus He declared that the Jews were more honorable, not preferring place to place, but giving them the precedence because of their intention. As though He had said, "About the `place' of worship ye have no need henceforth to dispute, but in the `manner' the Jews have an advantage over you Samaritans, for `ye,' He saith, `worship ye know not what; we know what we worship.'"

How then did the Samaritans "know not" what they worshiped? Because they thought that God was local and partial; so at least they served Him, and so they sent to the Persians, and reported that "the God of this place is wroth with us" (2 Kings 26), in this respect forming no higher opinion of Him than of their idols. Wherefore they continued to serve both Him and devils, joining things which ought not to be joined. The Jews, on the contrary, were free from this supposition, at least the greater part of them, and knew that He was God of the world. Therefore He saith, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship." Do not wonder that He numbereth Himself among Jews, for He speaketh to the woman's opinion of Him as though He were a Jewish Prophet, and therefore He putteth, "we worship." For that He is of the objects of worship is clear to every one, because to worship belongs to the creature, but to be worshiped to the Lord of the creature. But for a time He speaketh as a Jew; and the expression "we" in this place meaneth "we Jews." Having then exalted what was Jewish, He next maketh Himself credible, and persuadeth the woman to give the greater heed to His words, by rendering His discourse above suspicion, and showing that He doth not exalt what belongs to them by reason of relationship to those of His own tribe. For it is clear, that one who had made these declarations concerning the place on which the Jews most prided themselves, and thought that they were superior to all, and who had taken away their high claims, would not after this speak to get favor of any, but with truth and prophetic power. When therefore He had for a while removed her from such reasonings, say ing, "Woman, believe Me," and what follows, then He addeth, "for salvation is of the Jews." What He saith is of this kind: neither, that blessings to the world came from them, (for to know God and condemn idols had its beginning from them, and with you the very act of worship, although ye do it not rightly, yet received its origin from them,) or else, He speaketh of His own Coming. Or rather, one would not be wrong in calling both these things "salvation" which He said was "of the Jews"; which Paul implied when he said, "Of whom is Christ according to the flesh, who is God over

all." (Rom. ix. 5.) Seest thou how He commendeth the old Covenant, and showeth that it is the root of blessings, and that He is throughout not opposed to the Law, since He maketh the groundwork of all good things to come from the Jews?

Verse 23. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father.*

"We, O woman," He saith, "excel you in the manner of our worship, but even this shall henceforth have an end. Not the places only, but even the manner of serving God shall be changed. And this change is at your very doors. `For the hour cometh, and now is."

[2.] For since what the Prophets said they said long before the event, to show that here it is not so, He saith, "And now is." Think not, He saith, that this is a prophecy of such a kind as shall be accomplished after a long time, the fulfillment is already at hand and at your very doors, "when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." In saying "true," He excludeth Jews as well as Samaritans; for although the Jews be better than the Samaritans, yet are they far inferior to those that shall come, as inferior as is the type to the reality. But He speaketh of the Church, that she is the "true" worship, and such as is meet for God.

For the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

If then He in times past sought such as these, He allowed to those others their way of worship, not willingly, but from condescension, and for this reason, that He might bring them in also. Who then are "the true worshipers"? Those who confine not their service by place, and who serve God in spirit; as Paul saith, "Whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son": and again, "I beseech you that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service." (Rom. 1:9 and 12:1.) But when he saith,

Verse 24. *God is a Spirit* [God is spirit]. He declareth nothing else than His incorporeal Nature. Now the service of that which is incorporeal must needs be of the same character, and must be offered by that in us which is incorporeal, to wit, the soul, and purity of mind. Wherefore He saith, "they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." For because both Samaritans and Jews were careless about the soul, but took great pains about the body, cleansing it in divers ways, it is not, He saith, by purity of body, but by that which is incorporeal in us, namely the mind, that the incorporeal One is served. Sacrifice then not sheep and calves, but dedicate thyself to the Lord; make thyself a holocaust, this is to offer a living sacrifice. Ye must worship "in truth" ; as former things were types, such as circumcision, and whole burnt offerings, and victims, and incense, they now no longer exist, but all is "truth." For a man must now circumcise not his flesh, but his evil thoughts, and crucify himself, and remove and slay his unreasonable desires." The woman was made dizzy by His discourse, and fainted in at the sublimity of what He said, and, in her trouble, hear what she saith:

Verse 25, 26. *I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I am that speak unto thee.*

And whence came the Samaritans to expect the coming of Christ, seeing that they received Moses only? From the writings of Moses themselves. For even in the beginning He revealed the Son. "Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness" (Gen. 1:26), was said to the Son. It was He who talked with Abraham in the tent. (Gen. 18) And Jacob prophesying concerning Him said, "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until He come for whom it is reserved, and He is the expectation of nations." (Gen. xviii.) And Moses himself saith, "The Lord

thy God will raise up unto you a Prophet of your brethren like unto me, unto Him shall ye hearken." (Deut. xviii. 15.) And the circumstances attending the serpent, and the rod of Moses, and Isaac, and the sheep, and many other things they who chose might select as proclaiming His coming.

"And why, pray," saith one, "did not Christ lead on the woman by these means? why did He instance the serpent to Nicodemus, and mention prophecy to Nathanael, but to her say nothing of the kind? For what reason, and why?" Because they were men, and were versed in these things, she a poor ignorant woman unpracticed in the Scriptures. Wherefore He doth not speak to her from them, but draweth her on by the "water" and by prophecy, and bringeth her to make mention of Christ and then revealeth Himself; which had He at first told the woman when she had not questioned Him, He would have seemed to her to trifle and talk idly, while as it is by bringing her little by little to mention Him, at a fitting time He revealed Himself. To the Jews, who continually said, "How long dost Thou make us to doubt? tell us if Thou art the Christ" (c. 10:24), to them He gave no clear answer, but to this woman He said plainly, that He is. For the woman was more fair-minded than the Jews; they did not enquire to learn, but always to mock at Him, for had they desired to learn, the teaching which was by His words, and by the Scriptures, and by His miracles would have been sufficient. The woman, on the contrary, said what she said from an impartial judgment and a simple mind, as is plain from what she did afterwards; for she both heard and believed, and netted others also, and in every circumstance we may observe the carefulness and faith of the woman.

Verse 27. *And upon this came His disciples,* (very seasonably did they come when the teaching was finished,) "and marveled that He talked with the woman, yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, Why talkest Thou with her?"

[3.] At what did they marvel? At His want of pride and exceeding humility, that looked upon as He was, He endured with such lowliness of heart to talk with a woman poor, and a Samaritan. Still in their amazement they did not ask Him the reason, so well were they taught to keep the station of disciples, so much did they fear and reverence Him. For although they did not as yet hold the right opinion concerning Him, still they gave heed unto Him as to some marvelous one, and paid Him much respect. Yet they frequently are seen to act confidently; as when John lay upon His bosom, when they came to Him and said, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" (Matt. 18:1), when the sons of Zebedee entreated Him to set one of them on His right hand, and the other on His left. Why then did they not here question Him? Because since all those instances related to themselves, they had need to enquire into them, while what here took place was of no such great importance to them. And indeed John did that a long time after towards the very end, when He enjoyed greater confidence, and was bold in the love of Christ; for he it was, he saith, "whom Jesus loved." What could equal such blessedness?

But, beloved, let us not stop at this, the calling the Apostle blessed, but let us do all things that we also may be of the blessed, let us imitate the Evangelist, and see what it was that caused such great love. What then was it? He left his father, his ship, and his net, and followed Jesus. Yet this he did in common with his brother, and Peter, and Andrew, and the rest of the Apostles. What then was the special thing which caused this great love? Shall we discover it? He saith nothing of this kind about himself, but only that he was beloved; as to the righteous acts for which he was

beloved he has modestly been silent. That Jesus loved him with an especial love was clear to every one; yet John doth not appear conversing with or questioning Jesus privately, as Peter often did, and Philip, and Judas, and Thomas, except only when he desired to show kindness and compliance to his fellow Apostle; for when the chief of the Apostles by beckoning constrained him, then he asked. For these two had great love each for the other. Thus, for instance, they are seen going up together into the Temple and speaking in common to the people. Yet Peter in many places is moved, and speaks more warmly than John. And at the end he hears Christ say, "Peter, lovest thou Me more than these?" (c. 21:15.) Now it is clear that he who loved "more than these" was also beloved. But this in his case was shown by loving Jesus, in the case of the other by being beloved by Jesus.

What then was it which caused this especial love? To my thinking, it was that the man displayed great gentleness and meekness, for which reason he doth not appear in many places speaking openly. And how great a thing this is, is plain also from the case of Moses. It was this which made him such and so great as he was. There is nothing equal to lowliness of mind. For which cause Jesus with this began the Beatitudes, and when about to lay as it were the foundation and base of a mighty building, He placed first lowliness of mind. Without this a man cannot possibly be saved; though he fast, though he pray, though he give alms, if it be with a proud spirit, these things are abominable, if humility be not there; while if it be, all these things are amiable and lovely, and are done with safety. Let us then be modest, beloved, let us be modest; success is easy, if we be sober-minded. For after all what is it, O man, that exciteth thee to pride? Seest thou not the poverty of thy nature? the unsteadiness of thy will? Consider thine end, consider the multitude of thy sins. But perhaps because thou doest many righteous deeds thou art proud. By that very pride thou shalt undo them all. Wherefore it behoveth not so much him that has sinned as him that doeth righteousness to take pains to be humble. Why so? Because the sinner is constrained by conscience, while the other, except he be very sober, soon caught up as by a blast of wind is lifted on high, and made to vanish like the Pharisee. Dost thou give to the poor? What thou givest is not thine, but thy Master's, common to thee and thy fellow-servants. For which cause thou oughtest especially to be humbled, in the calamities of those who are thy kindred foreseeing thine own, and taking knowledge of thine own nature in their cases. We ourselves perhaps are sprung from such ancestors; and if wealth has shifted to you, it is probable that it will leave you again. And after all, what is wealth? A vain shadow, dissolving smoke, a flower of the grass, or rather something meaner than a flower. Why then art thou high-minded over grass? Doth not wealth fall to thieves, and effeminates, and harlots, and tomb-breakers? Doth this puff thee up, that thou hast such as these to share in thy possession? or dost thou desire honor? Towards gaining honor nothing is more serviceable than almsgiving. For the honors arising from wealth and power are compulsory, and attended with hatred, but these others are from the free will and real feeling of the honorers; and therefore those who pay them can never give them. Now if men show such reverence for the merciful, and invoke all blessings upon them, consider what return, what recompense they shall receive from the merciful God. Let us then seek this wealth which endureth forever, and never deserts us, that, becoming great here and glorious there, we may obtain everlasting blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Services this Week

- ❖ **Friday - 05.19.2023. – PARALYSIS - THE OFFICE OF SUPPLICATION TO SAINT NECTARIOS -05:00 PM – Confession**
- ❖ **Saturday - 05.20.2023. – Holy Liturgy for the repose and Pomen in honor of Linda Palmer – 08:00 AM – Everyone is free to join us.**
- ❖ **Sunday – 05.21.2023. - 6th of Sunday of Pascha – of the Blind Man- Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian- *Anniversary Celebration* 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy**

Donations May 7, 2023

Offering - \$ 1,150.00 Candles - \$100.00
Dues - \$200.00

Building Fund

In Memory of Linda Palmer

Donna Zimmerman - \$25, Richard & Suzette Gardenhour - \$25
Peter & Joanne Todorich - \$25

In Memory of Millie Moncilovich

Milan Moncilovich - \$80 and Paul & Xenia Jancarich - \$25

In Memory of Lina Palmer to the St. Nicholas Choir
from Dianna Dunnington - \$25

Large Candles

In Memory of Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Kathleen McDowell
In Memory of Bosiljka & Lazo Vuckovich from Dan & Dyne Tomak
In Memory of Julia & Demetrias Lambrinos from Dan & Dyne Tomak
In Memory of Andrew Grisin from Richard Kondas
In Memory of Damenja & Lazo Gjurich from Diane and Dan Tomak
In Memory of Connie Bartis from Bartis & Pavich Family

We are now taking donations for large candles in the Candle Room

Sunday, May 21st - Anniversary Celebration

Please make plans to join your Parish Family for this annual celebration.
Banquet to follow Divine Liturgy
(Adults \$20 - Sunday School Children Free)
Honored Kumovi, Richard & Suzette Gardenhour and honored guests,
recent High School and College Graduates.

REMINDER

Change in church time - Beginning Sunday, **June 4, 2023**. Divine Liturgy will begin at **9:30 AM** and continue to Sunday, September 2, 2023.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Polka-Fest June 2-4, 2023

Please see Suzette Gardenhour to secure your time to work to help make this event a success for us.

MEMORIAL SERVICES 2023

Memorial services at the Church cemeteries will be held as follows:

BENSHOF HILL CEMETERY - Saturday, June 10, 2023 - 9:30 AM (Begin at Bottom)

GRANDVIEW CEMETERY - Saturday, June 10, 2023 - Beginning at 2:00 PM

OLD ST. NICHOLAS CEMETERY - Saturday, June 17, 2023 - 9:30 AM

ST. PETKA CEMETERY - Saturday, June 17, 2023 - 10:30 AM - (Begin at Bottom)

Band of Brothers - July 13-15 & 19-22, 2023



Taste of Serbia - August 12, 2023



Slavic Festival - September 15-16, 2023